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- (1) DPJ head Ozawa criticizes Abe cabinet, noting his party is opposed to extending antiterrorism law

TOKYO SHIMBUN ONLINE NEWS
August 21, 2007, 12:56 p.m.

Kyodo

The major opposition Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa this morning gave a speech at a gathering of the "Ozawa School of Government" in Tokyo and again indicated his intention to oppose an extension of the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law. He stressed that his party was opposed to the extension, saying, "News reports said that I had conveyed to US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer my personal (opposition to the extension) when I recently met with him, but I at the time simply explained our party's principles to the ambassador."

Speaking of the Self-Defense Forces' (SDF) support operations going on under the law, Ozawa pointed out: "They have supplied goods for America's war, which has no connection with the United Nations. The basic principles of (overseas dispatches of SDF troops) have been undermined."

Ozawa rapped the Abe cabinet this way: "It's even unclear when the fall extraordinary session of the Diet will be convened. The cabinet is in the state of being brain dead." In the meantime, he said of the DPJ that "the DPJ has now been charged with a very serious mission" with the recent reversal of the positions in the Upper House between the ruling and opposition parties.

(2) SDF in transformation: Uniformed officers guided lawmakers after 9/11 (part 3)

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Abridged)
August 21, 2007

Right after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United

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States, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi ordered his aide not to waste any time.

The extremely short order reflected Koizumi's eagerness to speedily come up with measures to support the United States.

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Teijiro Furukawa ordered the Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB) to let its senior members attend a meeting to discuss legal affairs for sending Self-Defense Force troops overseas. Normally, a bill is drafted by a ministry or the Cabinet Secretariat for a check by the CLB. Such a standard process was too

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time-consuming at the time.

On the afternoon of September 15, the deputy CLB chief, deputy chief cabinet secretaries, senior officials from the Foreign Ministry and Defense Agency secretly met at Furukawa's office in the Kantei (Prime Minister's Official Residence).

"We can apply the legislation to deal with contingencies in areas surrounding Japan," some said. But it was absurd to include Afghanistan and Pakistan -- countries where Japanese troops might head for in the near future -- in the category of "areas surrounding Japan." The meeting consequently tilted toward establishing a new law.

Looking back at those days, then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said: "A plan to establish a new law came out on September 17. We also consulted the New Komeito on the matter." This happened only seven days after 9/11.

There were developments in the Foreign Ministry as well. Vice Foreign Minister Yoshiji Nogami ordered on September 12 senior ministry officials to draft a new law. Days later, Ambassador to the United States Shunji Yanai held a meeting with US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage at the State Department in Washington and sent a cable to Japan requesting the deployment of the SDF.

The Foreign Ministry's moves pressed the Kantei for enacting the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, according to a former Foreign

Ministry official.

Japanese lawmakers and bureaucrats took advantage of domestic and international calls for supporting the US antiterrorism operations. SDF officials also made a unique move.

Clad in plain clothes instead of their uniforms, Ground Staff Office officers, who were essentially the brains of the Ground Self-Defense Force, repeatedly called on lawmakers secretly. Their purpose was to persuade the lawmakers to keep turning their deaf ear to calls in the LDP for sending SDF troops to Afghanistan. It did not take time for talk to spread in the capitol district of Nagatacho that SDF troops would not be able to defend themselves under the strict weapons use rules. The government eventually decided to dispatch the Maritime Self-Defense Force, instead of the GSDF, to the Indian Ocean to engage in refueling operations.

Uniformed officers making direct contacts with lawmakers behind the backs of Defense Ministry officials not in uniform has been taboo from the viewpoint of civilian control. "Such an act is absolutely unacceptable," a senior Defense Ministry official said.

Yet, the uniformed officers' action pointed to a problem with the

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trend to accelerate the overseas deployment of the SDF before meeting the required conditions.

Former government officials believe that the uniformed officers' lobbying activities affected political decisions. "The collapse of the WTC Towers was that shocking," Fukuda explained.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered a speech at the North Atlantic Council in January this year in which he said, "Japanese will no longer shy away from carrying out overseas activities involving the SDF," underscoring Japan's commitment to Afghanistan.

But the Defense Ministry is void of any moves to consider sending troops to Afghanistan. A GSDF officer predicted: "Situating inland, engaging in refueling operations in Afghanistan would be difficult. The security situation in that country is also deteriorating. The government will probably not send troops there."

Lawmakers reportedly have listened to what uniformed officers said from an awareness of a lack of military common sense that exists.

(3) Japan's diplomacy toward DPRK: Japan needs to shift to engagement policy, Hajime Izumi says

YOMIURI (Page 13) (Full)
August 21, 2007

Interview with Hajime Izumi, professor at University of Shizuoka

Interviewer: Keiichiro U

-- The Korean Peninsula situation has begun to move. What is your view about this?

Izumi: A kind of trust relationship is emerging between the United States and North Korea. The Bush administration has begun to cut a deal with North Korea. Apparently, the US wants to get concrete progress and results regarding the nuclear issue by the 2008 presidential election in November. North Korea's concern is that it may have to toe the mark again if nothing is settled while the (Bush) administration is in office. There seems to be an agreement in this sense between the US and North Korea.

-- What forced the US to switch its policy toward the North?

Izumi: I think it is because it was shocked by the North's nuclear test last October. The US fears that nuclear weapons may fall into the hands of terrorists like al-Qaeda. The US may think that if no action is taken, that fear could come true. The US is therefore doing all it can to put an end to the North's production of plutonium and get it to disclose all the plutonium it possesses.

-- What is the objective of North Korea?

Izumi: Although it may be difficult to reach the point of normalizing diplomatic ties under the Bush administration, the North Koreans want to pave the way with preliminary steps in that direction. They are first aiming at North Korea being removed from the list of states that sponsor terrorism. Next, they would insist that their country be dropped from the list of hostile states under the Trade Act once the ending of the Korean War is confirmed. In order for North Korea's current political system to survive, it is

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necessary for the North to be allowed access to the international economic system, including the international financial system. The North would also call for the establishment of liaison offices in both the US and the North, as well as the construction of a light water reactor to secure energy.

-- What is your view about the ongoing move for holding an inter-Korean summit?

Izumi: This came up because Pyongyang is thinking about the presidential election this December in South Korea. Pyongyang apparently thinks (a summit) would have a favorable effect on the presidential race. It deems it necessary for the South to continue to have a ruling party-affiliated government with its so-called sunshine policy over the next five years after President Roh Moo Hyun steps down. If a conciliatory government toward North Korea is established in South Korea, this would give the North diplomatic leeway when it starts dealing with the US and Japan. The keyword for the planned inter-Korean summit is "peace." The North in some way or the other will likely declare mutual nonaggression between two Koreas and peaceful coexistence, and may try to use the declaration as a basis for creating a permanent peace mechanism to be discussed by four countries -- two Koreas, the US, and China -- in the future.

-- Given this, Japan has fallen behind in its approach toward North Korea.

Izumi: Japan needs to shift to an engagement policy toward the North. Japan should announce it is ready to negotiate with it. The term "negotiate" in this regard implies Japan is willing to cut a deal with the North. Japan also needs to be ready to reward the North if it does something that will benefit Japan. In negotiations with the North Koreans, Japan should comprehensively discuss the issues of abductions, and nuclear and missile development and aim to resolve those three issues. This approach is not a new one. Japan has insisted since the days of Prime Minister Koizumi that diplomatic normalization between Japan and North Korea will not come unless those three issues are resolved. However, the question is the yardstick for us to think those issues are resolved has not yet been made clear.

-- What do you think is the yardstick?

Izumi: When it comes to the nuclear issue, if "complete abandonment" comes, that would be seen as the issue being resolved. On the missile issue, Japan should pressure the North to dismantle ballistic missiles with the range of 500 or more kilometers so that not only Rodong and Taepodong missiles that can reach Japan but also Taepodong 2 missiles that can reach the US will be included. The US would move to negotiate with the North if Japan strongly urges the US to do so. Japan can take the lead in negotiations over this missile area. On the abduction issue, Japan until now has insisted that (1) all surviving abductees should be returned to Japan; (2) the truth should be elucidated, and (3) suspects should be handed over to Japan. But unless the truth is hunted for, how many abductees are still alive will remain unclear, thereby the issue remains unresolved. Japan could open the way for the North Koreans to respond to negotiations with it if it calls for comprehensively resolving those three issues.

(4) Daring prediction -- 2007 reversal of power in Upper House (1):

Fate of the Abe administration

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
August 21, 2007

By Tatsuki Kanei

The outlook in the political circles is becoming increasingly unclear after the reversal of power between the ruling and opposition camps in the Upper House. How will the political situation unfold after a change in the power balance between the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) under party head Ichiro Ozawa? What developments will take place regarding pending policy issues under a "distorted situation at the Diet"? Here is a daring prediction by Tokyo Shimbun political department's front-line reporter.

Question: It appears that Prime Minister Abe is under enormous pressure because he is staying in power despite the defeat in the Upper House race.

Answer: Procedure wise, there is no problem about his staying in power. However, it is certainly difficult to understand why he does not take responsibility for the crushing defeat. The LDP is filled with pent-up feelings, and the people must be feeling the same way.

Cabinet reshuffle to bring about a change of public feeling

Q: The cabinet approval rating is floundering in the 20 percent range. Will there be a chance for it to rise again?

A: There are hardly any administrations that resuscitated once the public gave up on it. Unfavorable things continued to take place even after the recent Upper House election, including the dismissal of farm minister Norihiko Akagi and a slapstick comedy regarding the appointment of a new vice defense minister. Presenting a fresh cabinet by shuffling the cabinet on 27 August may be the final chance for the Abe administration.

Q: What approach will Prime Minister Abe take in shuffling his cabinet?

A: Because he has been indicating that he will shuffle the cabinet to bring about a change in public feeling, it may safely be said that almost all of the ministers will be replaced. But I wonder if that is sufficient.

Q: What do you mean by that?

A: Some LDP lawmakers think that joining the Abe cabinet is like boarding a sinking ship.

In addition, some lawmakers are worried that they, too, might have to face a "politics and money" scandal, similar to the one that involved Akagi. Many lawmakers think that it is better to "pass" on the upcoming shuffle, rather than risk damaging their political careers.

Q: What should the prime minister do to form a new cabinet that can elicit positive public reactions?

A: He should even appoint people who were critical of him. He should avoid coming up with a lineup that will be evaluated as the "cabinet of friends." Frankly speaking, the focus of the reshuffle is whether the prime minister will appoint such lawmakers as former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda and Upper House lawmaker Yoichi Masuzoe, who repeatedly made critical comments about the prime minister.

Q: Will there be surprising appointments similar to the ones which

former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi made?

A: Prime Minister Abe does not favor appointing lawmakers no one expected just for the sake of doing something different, although everybody may say, "Wow," if the prime minister goes as far as appointing former Prime Minister Koizumi. Mind you, Koizumi will never accept a request to join the new cabinet.

A Brake

Q: If the prime minister fails to score points by reshuffling the cabinet, the only step left for him to take is to regain public trust through policies.

A: The prime minister is well aware of that. He is desperate to improve the situation. However, he will have to carry out "exclusively defense-oriented" administrative management for the time being because he will be faced with an offensive by the DPJ.

Q: Prime Minister Abe is closely associated with constitutional revision.

A: But it will be difficult to push that forward. Constitutional revision requires an approval of the two-thirds of lawmakers in both chambers of the Diet. However, because of the defeat in the Upper House election, it is even more difficult now to attain the "two-thirds." There is no longer any hope for the Diet to initiate constitutional revision in 2010 as the LDP hopes.

Q: The prime minister was making a strong effort on educational reform as well.

A: Yes. The Education Rebuilding Council is scheduled to release its third report in December, but this reform plan is also expected to slow down.

Q: Why is that?

A: The centerpiece of the report will be the introduction of the education voucher system. Under the system, a student can choose a school to attend and submit to the school a voucher provided by the local government.

Q: But is it not good for students to have a broader variety of schools to choose?

A: The system is good for students in the urban area. However, students in provinces do not have as many choices. Given the fact that anger at "the abandonment of the provinces" was expressed in the Upper House election, it will be difficult for the government to take policies that will further widen disparities between the urban area and the provinces.

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Q: What are the Abe administration's other policies?

A: The Abe administration will continue to work strenuously on the pension issue and the reform of the public servant system. In these fields, however, the DPJ, which is backed by "numerical strength," will submit counterproposals one after another. Therefore, the administration is expected to make compromises in some cases.

A Dilemma

Q: Then, the Abe administration will not be able to express its unique character.

A: That is right. Since the defeat in the Upper House race, Prime Minister Abe has been saying that he will "reconsider what I need to reconsider." However, if he reconsiders and changes the "beautiful country" line and policies to "break away from the post-war regime," there will be little reason for the Abe administration to continue existing.

Q: So, that is a dilemma the Abe administration is faced with.

A: The prime minister needs to urgently break that situation and end the doldrums. If LDP lawmakers judge that "it will not be possible to fight the Lower House election under the Abe administration," an attack to remove Abe will be launched at once.

Upcoming Political Events

August

21 Defense Minister Yuriko Koike's visits to India and Pakistan
(until August 25)
22 Japan-India summit
 Bank of Japan Policy Board meeting
24 Japan-Malaysia summit
 Prime Minister Abe's news conference
25 Prime Minister Abe returns home
27 The reshuffle of the Cabinet and LDP executives
28 Joint ceremony for late former Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa

September

8 The summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC)
in Sydney
 (until September 9)
18 A UN General Assembly session to start

Mid-September?

An extraordinary Diet session to be convened.

November

1 The anti-terrorism special measures law to expire
? An experts' panel is planned to release the final report on the
exercising of the right
 To collective self-defense

December

The Education Rebuilding Council to release the third report

(5) Fate of WTO Doha Round

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 9) (Full)
August 21, 2007

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The Doha Round of global trade talks under the World Trade Organization (WTO) will resume negotiations in September, with the aim of reaching an agreement by the end of the year. Discussion will be conducted with a focus on reducing tariffs on agricultural products. But it seems difficult to reach a conclusion because of the conflict of interests existing among member countries.

WTO tasked with settling trade disputes

The WTO is an organization tasked with making trade rules and mediating disputes. When the Great Depression took place in 1929, countries erected the wall of tariffs to protect their economies from being affected by the depression. Such protective efforts, though, worked negatively and resulted in destabilizing the world economy, forming a remote cause of World War II. Out of reflection on this, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the predecessor of the WTO, was established in 1948.

After joining the GATT in 1955, Japan achieved economic development by exporting automobiles and electrical equipment under the free-trade system.

In 1995, the GATT was reorganized into the WTO. At present, 151 countries and regions are members of the WTO. The organization produced results in reducing tariffs, establishing rules, and protecting intellectual property. Meanwhile, many cases have been brought into the WTO for dispute settlement.

Countries studying chairmen's proposals, aiming at concluding negotiations this year

In each round, members set a deadline and draw up trade rules. Nine

rounds of talks, including the current Doha Round, were held so far. The focus of discussion in the first six rounds was on tariffs. Starting in the 7th round, the member countries discussed such non-tariff barriers as state subsidies and import procedures. In the previous Uruguay Round (1986 - 1994), Japan was pressured to decide to open up its rice market.

The ongoing round, which started in November 2001, marks the 7th year this year. But the meeting among the United States, the European Union (EU), Brazil, and India ended in rupture in June. Since then, the stage of negotiations has been moved to plenary meetings. For now, the member countries are studying the proposals for agreement presented on July 17 by the chairmen of talks on the agriculture and industrial areas. They will resume negotiations on Sept. 3, with the aim of agreeing on details within this year.

Japan makes own assertions

In the agricultural area, the Japanese government cannot easily make concessions, because if low-priced farm products flow into the nation, domestic farmers will receive a serious blow.

Japan has insisted that high tariffs should be allowed for "up to 15 PERCENT (200 items)" of all products. But the chairman's proposal set the maximum percent at "6 PERCENT (about 60 items)." In this case, it will become impossible for Japan to protect its all mainstay products - rice, wheat, dairy products, and sugar. An official of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry said: "We would like to proceed with negotiations, focusing on 8 PERCENT

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."

The chairman's proposal calls on industrialized countries and developing countries to reduce their import tariffs to up to 8-9 percent and up to 19-23 percent, respectively. There is a difference of more than 10 PERCENT between both sides. As said by an official of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan will continue to assert: "Developing countries should reduce coefficient."

It is not easy to conclude the talks in plenary meetings now that many countries' interests are complicatedly involved. Many observers presume that if an agreement is not reached by the end of this year, a settlement of the talks might become hopeless because the US will lose bargaining power, with the presidential elections scheduled for next year.

In such a case, countries may begin to pour their energy into making bilateral or regional trade rules, such as free trade agreements (FTA) - designed to remove trade barriers with specific countries or regions - and economic partnership agreements (EPA) that would set rules on investment protection, in addition to trade. Japan started late, so whether Japan will be able to make a roll back hinges on whether it will be able to strengthen economic partnerships in East Asia.

(6) New Komeito head Ota in interview stresses placing more importance on daily lives of ordinary people than on constitutional amendments

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)
August 21, 2007

-- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has stayed on in office, although the ruling coalition suffered a crushing defeat in the July House of Councillors election. There are views expressing dissatisfaction with it in the ruling coalition.

Ota: I think a majority of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) members probably support the prime minister's decision. I do say what I should say. But I basically support his continuance in premiership.

-- Prime Minister Abe has advocated his policy of breaking with the postwar regime and has been enthusiastic about constitutional

reform.

Ota: The people are more interested in how to deal with a drastic change in society than constitutional amendments.

-- Do you mean that priority was placed on the daily lives of ordinary people rather than on amending Article 9 of the Constitution?

Ota: Absolutely right. Pushing ahead with constitutional debate without making any fuss is the role of politicians. I think, however, public opinion in the recent Upper House was that politics should give more consideration to the daily lives of people. We should carry out constitutional debate in a calm manner based on the timetable we have set. There is no need for us to feel pressured to do something.

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-- It seems that the New Komeito's effort to play up its political identity was a little weak.

Ota: We have two challenges -- one being to promote the party's presence and the other strengthening the coalition government. Since we are required to do both, we must say what we have to say.

-- The prime minister will shuffle the cabinet and the LDP executive on Aug. 27. Do you have any requests?

Ota: The prime minister must restore public confidence. It's not good that cabinet ministers make controversial remarks in succession. Unless he puts competent persons in cabinet posts, he won't be able to gain confidence.

-- The fall extraordinary session of the Diet will deal with a bill to extend the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law. Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa clearly expressed to US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer his party's opposition to an extension of to an extension of the law.

Ota: Since it's extremely important issue, deep discussion is necessary in the ruling camp. We need to discuss the issue at an appropriate time with the DPJ. We will face various scenes.

-- The number of the LDP and New Komeito members is a short of majority in the Upper House.

Ota: At the extraordinary Diet session in 1998, in which deliberations were carried out on bills related to financial issues, then DPJ President Naoto Kan's stance of avoiding Lower House dissolution was great. Mr. Ozawa, however, might try to do so. I think if he says that he will take responsibility to evade such, he will then be able to have the reins of government.

-- The New Komeito was Ozawa's partner when he headed the defunct New Frontier Party. How do you assess Ozawa now?

Ota: I think he was a person who is capable of addressing issues. However, there are differences in his views when he headed the NFP and that of now. I feel something is wrong.

-- There is a view that if a scandal involving a cabinet minister after the extra session convenes, the Abe administration will completely die.

Ota: Making mistakes in policy and in words and deeds is no longer unforgivable. The cabinet ministers must fulfill their duties with a sense of urgency.

-- When do you think the Lower House will be dissolved?

Ota: It is important to take a certain period of time between the Upper House election and the Lower House one. The next Lower House election should be conducted one year from now. I think the election will be held after the G-8 summit in Hokkaido next summer.

(Corrected copy) Editorial: Prime Minister Abe must use caution in discussing late Judge Pal

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)
August 18, 2007

TOKYO 00003865 011 OF 012

During his overseas trip from August 19 that will take him to India, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is scheduled to meet with the son of the late Radhabinod Pal, who served as a judge at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal (International Military Tribunal for the Far East).

Pal was the only judge at the tribunal that took the dissenting view that all of Japan's 25 Class-A war criminals, including former Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, were not guilty.

Pal's question about the legitimacy of the Allied trials stuck a chord with the Japanese people, who were crushed by a sense of defeat. He has been idolized by some as the only judge who found Japan not guilty.

After the war, Pal was often invited to visit Japan. Tokyo decorated him with the First Order of Merit with the Grand Cordon of the Rising Sun during his last visit to Japan, which was made possible by then Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, the grandfather of Prime Minister Abe.

About his planned meeting with the son of the late Judge Pal, Abe said: "Judge Pal was closely associated with Japan. I am looking forward to seeing his son to learn about his father." The story is not that simple.

The international community has been gazing coldly at Japan because of the former Imperial Japanese Army's involvement with the comfort-women issue, as well as prime ministerial visits to Yasukuni Shrine. Abe's meeting might end up sending out a message of rejecting the results of the international tribunal and Japan's wartime responsibility.

The sense of distrust in Abe comes from his reluctance to accept the results of the tribunal. Soon after assuming office, Prime Minister Abe used diplomatic language at the Diet, saying: "In terms of country-to-country relations, I am not in a position to object to the result of the tribunal."

Views are still split over the results of the tribunal. Such concepts as a "crime against peace" and a "crime against humanity" were established after the war's end, and the United States, a victor of the war, was not tried for dropping atomic bomb on Japan. At the same time, massacres and conspiracies by the Imperial Japanese Army came to light for the first time. The tribunal also served as a milestone for establishing international law on war.

Although the tribunal had both good and bad aspects, there is no doubt that Japan was allowed to rejoin the international community because it accepted the verdict. That was Japan's way of bringing the war to closure. Political leaders must always keep that in mind.

It is also noteworthy that some Japanese have taken Pal's view to serve their own interests. Specifically, some conservatives have taken it to mean that Japan was free from war responsibility.

Pal's view was that under the international law at the time, Japan could not be held responsible for the war of aggression. At the same time, he harshly criticized the Imperial Japanese Army for the Nanjing Massacre and other incidents. The judge held Japan morally instead of legally responsible.

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Ashis Nandy, an Indian political psychologist and sociologist of science who knew Pal personally, strongly warned against using Pal

to justify Japanese militarism.

Is Prime Minister Abe aware of Judge Pal's overall view? He must abstain from partially discussing Pal's views with his son.

MESERVE